

morals or ethics. Among savage and barbarous races there is practically no relation of religion to morals. It is in fact a system of buying the favor of imaginary good or evil spirits—by offering ceremonies and personal suffering.

Even among more enlightened people the great virtue is thought to be belief, ritualistic observances, membership in a religious body and contributions to its support, with good conduct and right living as a sort of secondary incident. Even in our own country religion has not the deep significance as a moral force that it ought to have. It is freely conceded that many ministers, and multitudes of the laity are earnest, sincere, noble and good people. These people are honorable, moral and upright in life; good citizens, good neighbors and good in all the relations of life, though some of them somewhat intolerant in reference to avowed freethinkers.

But while all this is true, there are multitudes of people in the churches, not because they are good, not because they are seriously interested in morality but because they think that the church is a savior; that religion consists of forms and ceremonies; professions and prayers; assent to creeds and articles of faith. They think that belonging to church gives them standing in society, credit at stores and patronage in their business. They are loud in their denunciation of unbelief and unbelievers many of whom are not only their superiors in intellect but in morals and conduct.

Suppose all of this kind of people were weeded out of the church and their names erased from the roster, the numerical strength of the church would be very much reduced. It is popular now to belong to church, or to be at least an adherent of the Christian religion—and there is always a very great number of people who always get on the popular side for no other reason than that it is popular.

But there is getting to be a vast number of people who, while they believe in morality and good conduct, are not considered religious because they have no church connections or affiliations. They find most religious organizations so burdened with theology and creeds to which they cannot conscientiously subscribe, that they could not be admitted to membership in any of them, even if they should apply.

What intelligent people of the better class want is a rational religion—one based upon scientific facts, and, at least reasonable theories, right living, good conduct, principle, honor, goodness of heart humanitarianism, love of truth, honesty and justice. These surely must be of more importance than assent to creeds or sets of theological opinions.

We want a religion whose cornerstone is

reason rather than so-called revelation, good conduct rather than creeds and humanitarianism rather than piety.

Kanahwa Falls, W. Va.

### BUCKEYE SECULAR UNION CONVENTION.

#### Attractive Program is Announced and Friends of the Cause Are Urged to Rally to It's Support.

The official call and program is now issued for the Seventh Annual convention of the Buckeye Secular Union, to be held at Schenck's Hall, 335 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio, on Sunday, September 12, 1909. It is to be hoped, and the Blade hopes, that all Freethinkers in Ohio and adjoining states, and from other states, who can consistently and conveniently do so, will not only attend this convention and encourage these gallant workers in our cause by their presence, but work to make this the greatest gathering ever held in the history of the Union. While the last convention at Canal Dover was a good one, well attended and financially successful, with Columbus as a more central point, and the hosts of Freethinkers residing in the immediate vicinity, the coming convention ought to eclipse all past efforts.

#### PROGRAM:

##### Morning Session.

- 9:00—Address of Welcome—Geo. O. Roberts.
- Response—Dr. Ellanore M. Poland.
- 10:00—Appointment of Committees—By the President.
- Report of the Secretary—Miss Lou Lawrence.
- Report of the Treasurer—J. Wilbur White.
- 10:30—Election of Officers for the Ensuing Year.

- 11:00—Essay: The Bible in the Public Schools—Helen M. Lucas.
- 11:15—Song: Thomas Paine—Libby Culbertson Macdonald.
- 11:30—Short Speeches—By Members.
- 12:00—Adjourn for Luncheon, to American Hotel or elsewhere.

##### Afternoon Session.

- 1:00—Address: Decay of Orthodoxy, or End of Dogma—Dr. T. J. Bowles.
- 2:30—Song: Ingersoll—Libby Culbertson Macdonald.
- 2:45—The Spirit of the Times—J. A. Culbertson.
- 3:15—Correct Thinking—Parker H. Sercombe.
- 4:00—Trolley to Indianola and Olentangy Parks—Everybody happy.

##### Evening Session.

- 7:30—Oration: Freethinkers' Funerals—Dr. J. B. Wilson.
- 8:15—Materialism, Atheism, Agnosticism

and Infidelity—Otto Wettstein.

9:00—Progress of Free Thought and Free Press—John R. Charlesworth.

10:00—Choir Invisible (Elliott's)—Lou Lawrence.

#### Notice.

The headquarters will be at the American Hotel, No. 20 South High St., where ample accommodations for members and visitors will be reserved. Rates, \$1.00 and \$1.50 per day, American plan.

The Parlor will be used by the Officers and Members on Saturday and Sunday. The Secretary, Miss Lou Lawrence, will have charge and all members will register on arrival.

The Reception Committee will be at the hotel all day Saturday to look after the comfort of arrivals, so come early and get acquainted.

Round Table discussion in parlor all evening, to which all free thinkers and friends are cordially and courteously invited.

GEO. O. ROBERTS,  
MISS LOU LAWRENCE,  
HELEN M. LUCAS,

Reception Committee.

#### PICNIC DEBATE.

LINEVILLE, IOWA.—Sunday, August 15, I will hold a picnic debate in a grove near here on the Prophecies of the Bible. There will be a fore and afternoon session with a basket dinner in the mean time. After the debate there will be a balloon ascension. My opponent is not a debater but has the privilege of substituting any preacher he may choose to take a part or all of his time.—A. A. SNOW.



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